

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, CS
SUBJECT: VESCO CASE

REF: SAN JOSE 1244

1. ON MARCH 21 VESCO APPEALED DECISION OF SECOND COURT OF INSTRUCTION ON SECURITIES FRAUD INDICTMENT RETURNED MARCH 16. VESCO AND ASSOCIATES HAD UNTIL COB MARCH 21 TO DO SO. SECOND COURT DECISION WILL NOW BE REVIEWED BY FIRST SUPERIOR CRIMINAL COURT IN PROCESS EXPECTED TO TAKE AT LEAST ONE MONTH.

2. ON MARCH 17 VESCO AND ACCOMPLICES MADE BOND OF 300,000 COLONES FOR VESCO AND 100,000 COLONES FOR LEBLANC, STRICKLER, ET AL. HOWEVER AFTER ORIGINAL BOND SET, JUDGE RAISED AMOUNT TO 3,000,000 (\$351,288) COLONES FOR VESCO AND 1,000,000 COLONES EACH FOR OTHERS. SO FAR, ACCORDING TO REPORTS EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED, THIS NEW BOND HAS NOT BEEN POSTED. IT IS ASSUMED BY MEDIA THAT APPEAL PROCESS INCLUDES ARGUMENT THAT HIGHER BOND IS EXCESSIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, RECHNITZER'S LAWYERS ARE ARGUING THAT JUDGE ORDER THE JAILING OF VESCO AND ACCOMPLICES FOR NOT HAVING POSTED THE HIGHER BOND.

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3. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE ASSETS OF VESCO AND HIS ASSOCIATES AS WELL AS \$5 MILLION OF INTER-AMERICAN CAPITAL ASSETS HAVE BEEN ORDERED EMBARGOED BY THE COURT.

4. MEDIA, EMBASSY LEGAL CONTACTS, AND OTHER VESCO WATCHERS HAVE ALLEGED THAT THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS HAS

BEEN HALTED BECAUSE OF THE INDICTMENT. CIVIL
REGISTRY HAS MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT. TO
CONTRARY, A HIGH CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICIAL HAS TOLD CONSOFF
THAT CASE WILL GO ON, AND THAT REGISTRY IS PREPARING
LETTER TO EMBASSY TO INQUIRE OFFICIALLY RE VESCO'S U.S.
CITIZENSHIP STATUS. FIGUERES WAS SCHEDULED TO GIVE HIS
CHARACTER WITNESS TESTIMONY MARCH 22; HOWEVER, MEDIA ARE
REPORTING TODAY THAT FIGUERES HAS THE FLU AND WILL
NOT APPEAR.

5. THE FEAR AMONG MANY VESCO WATCHERS IS THAT THE LOCAL
JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COULD DRAG ON FOR MONTHS, OR FOR YEARS,
IF CASE GOES TO TRIAL. WHETHER VESCO AND HIS FRIENDS
EVENTUALLY MAKE A HEFTY ADDITIONAL BOND PAYMENT IS ALSO
CONSIDERED AN INDICATION OF HOW SERIOUS VESCO IS ABOUT
TOUGHING IT OUT IN COSTA RICA AS THE WINDS OF POLITICAL
CHANGE KEEP BLOWING. VESCO'S LAWYER SAYS PUBLICLY THAT
HIS CLIENT HAS FAITH IN THE COSTA RICAN JUDICIAL
SYSTEM. ON THE CARAZO SIDE, THE PRESIDENT-ELECT
CONTINUES TO LIMIT ALL HIS RESPONSES TO VESCO QUESTIONS
WITH A TERSE "HE WILL LEAVE COSTA RICA" REPLY.
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